



Welcome. We are a group of
Friends **E**xploring **A**nd **S**haring **T**ogether,
and we are so pleased to welcome you to this Gifted Table.

Here, we each come as we are – there is no preaching, no pressure, just the warmth of welcome, the hope of honest connection, and the joy of being in community.

Each week we follow this simple rhythm, as we learn to listen deeply to each other, and to God

- **Friends** (5–10 mins): Welcome, and a simple icebreaker.
- **Exploring** (10–15 mins): Words or phrases that stand out.
- **And** (5–6 mins): Receiving the gift of wondering.
- **Sharing** (15–20 mins): Conversations, stories, and a possible creative task.
- **Together** (10 mins): Sending and singing.

Whether you have come on your own seeking answers, or because a friend invited you, know that there is a place set especially for you around this table.

We do hope to see you again, and that through **G**race,
Invitation, **F**aith, **T**ransformation, **E**ncounter, and **D**iscovery,
we will celebrate this season as **FEAST**.



Welcome. We are a group of
Friends **E**xploring **A**nd **S**haring **T**ogether,
and we are so pleased to welcome you to this Gifted Table.

Here, we each come as we are – there is no preaching, no pressure, just the warmth of welcome, the hope of honest connection, and the joy of being in community.

Each week we follow this simple rhythm, as we learn to listen deeply to each other, and to God

- **Friends** (5–10 mins): Welcome, and a simple icebreaker.
- **Exploring** (10–15 mins): Words or phrases that stand out.
- **And** (5–6 mins): Receiving the gift of wondering.
- **Sharing** (15–20 mins): Conversations, stories, and a possible creative task.
- **Together** (10 mins): Sending and singing.

Whether you have come on your own seeking answers, or because a friend invited you, know that there is a place set especially for you around this table.

We do hope to see you again, and that through **G**race,
Invitation, **F**aith, **T**ransformation, **E**ncounter, and **D**iscovery,
we will celebrate this season as **FEAST**.

John 1:1-14 NRSV *The Word Became Flesh*

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.

⁶There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

John 1:1-14 NRSV *The Word Became Flesh*

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.

⁶There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

Week 5 – The gift of Encounter

U A Fanthorpe (1929-2009)
BC:AD (2002)

**This was the moment when
Before
Turned into After, and the
future's
Uninvented timekeepers
presented arms.**

**This was the moment when
nothing
Happened. Only dull peace
Sprawled boringly over the
earth.**

**This was the moment when even
energetic Romans
Could find nothing better to do
Than counting heads in remote
provinces.**

**And this was the moment
When a few farm workers and
three
Members of an obscure Persian
sect
Walked haphazard by starlight
straight
Into the kingdom of heaven.**

Week 5 – The gift of Encounter

U A Fanthorpe (1929-2009)
BC:AD (2002)

**This was the moment when
Before
Turned into After, and the
future's
Uninvented timekeepers
presented arms.**

**This was the moment when
nothing
Happened. Only dull peace
Sprawled boringly over the
earth.**

**This was the moment when even
energetic Romans
Could find nothing better to do
Than counting heads in remote
provinces.**

**And this was the moment
When a few farm workers and
three
Members of an obscure Persian
sect
Walked haphazard by starlight
straight
Into the kingdom of heaven.**

Week 5 – The gift of Encounter

**A ray of hope flickers in the sky
A tiny star lights up way up high
All across the land, dawns a
brand new morn
This comes to pass when a child
is born**

**A silent wish sails the seven seas
The winds of change whisper in
the trees
And the walls of doubt crumble,
tossed and torn
This comes to pass when a child
is born**

**A rosy hue settles all around
You've got to feel you're on solid
ground
For a spell or two, no one seems
forlorn
This comes to pass when a child
is born**

***And all of this happens because
the world is waiting
Waiting for one child
Black, white, yellow, no one
knows
But a child that will grow up and
turn tears to laughter
Hate to love, war to peace and
everyone to everyone's
neighbour
And misery and suffering will be
words to be forgotten forever***

**It's all a dream, an illusion now
It must come true, sometime
soon somehow
All across the land, dawns a
brand new morn
This comes to pass when a child
is born**

Week 5 – The gift of Encounter

**A ray of hope flickers in the sky
A tiny star lights up way up high
All across the land, dawns a
brand new morn
This comes to pass when a child
is born**

**A silent wish sails the seven seas
The winds of change whisper in
the trees
And the walls of doubt crumble,
tossed and torn
This comes to pass when a child
is born**

**A rosy hue settles all around
You've got to feel you're on solid
ground
For a spell or two, no one seems
forlorn
This comes to pass when a child
is born**

***And all of this happens because
the world is waiting
Waiting for one child
Black, white, yellow, no one
knows
But a child that will grow up and
turn tears to laughter
Hate to love, war to peace and
everyone to everyone's
neighbour
And misery and suffering will be
words to be forgotten forever***

**It's all a dream, an illusion now
It must come true, sometime
soon somehow
All across the land, dawns a
brand new morn
This comes to pass when a child
is born**